

WHEN 'GOD' DECIDES TO START OVER

Chapter 51: Angel's Wings

"Are you sure you want to play according to the Mad Ball Trial rules? Do you even know what the rules of the Mad Ball Trial are?" The player looked at Li Xiu as if he was looking at a joke.

"Li Xiu, don't act impulsively." Kun Sha stopped Li Xiu, knowing the player's background very well. He knew if Li Xiu really wanted to take action against him, he would suffer a major loss.

The player was named Shale, the main striker of the Killer Whale team, nicknamed Killer Whale. His style in the football league was very aggressive, and many players collapsed under him. Several goalkeepers were kicked into immediate retirement.

It is said that he was a murderer before, and nobody knew how many people he killed back home. He fled to Tyrone City after being hunted locally. Because of some football skills, he was eyed by the owner of the Killer Whale team and recruited under their banner.

His physical quality is extremely strong, and his methods are very ruthless. He is skilled in combat techniques, and his overall ability is not weaker than Pa Shan. If it really comes to a life-and-death struggle, he might be even more dangerous than Pa Shan.

If it's a normal football skill competition, Kun Sha doesn't think Li Xiu would lose. But if it's really according to the Mad Ball Trial rules, Shale wouldn't bother to kick any balls; he would directly come up and destroy Li Xiu. Given Li Xiu's physical quality, he would surely suffer.

"What's wrong? Was what you said earlier just nonsense?" Shale sneered contemptuously.

"Shale, say a few less words. You're teammates; there's no need to make it like this." Kun Sha frowned and said.

"What you say is also reasonable; having such a teammate is really a blessing for all of us. When he gets on the field, he'll die; blood sacrifices at the start might even boost everyone's morale, making it easier for us to win ten against eleven." Shale sneered as he spoke.

Kun Sha looked a bit displeased, as Shale's words were clearly provocative, making other teammates more dissatisfied with Li Xiu.

After all, when it comes to life and death, no one wants to carry a burden.

It's already a pressing situation; if the problem isn't solved, everyone would be scattered sand, let alone getting the S-level trial rewards; whether they can beat the Guyue City team is another matter.

But Li Xiu's situation, Kun Sha couldn't think of a good way to solve it for the moment.

"I'll compete with you." Pa Shan stood out, blocking in front of Li Xiu, staring at Shale.

"What's this? Is he a baby who needs protection? During the Mad Ball Trial, shall we also appoint someone to protect him? Might as well bring a nurse along." Shale's words raised a burst of laughter.

Li Xiu held back the furious Pa Shan, calmly said to Shale, "As I said before, just you and me, a match under Mad Ball Trial rules, whoever loses shuts up."

"Alright, then let's do it; what's with all the talk?" Shale provocatively challenged.

Kun Sha wanted to stop Li Xiu, but Li Xiu waved his hand: "Problems need solving; otherwise, they will only get bigger."

After speaking, Li Xiu headed towards the field.

All players had already stopped training, giving Li Xiu and Shale space, watching the two on the field with interest.

They all speculated how long Li Xiu could last under Shale, whether Shale would actually kill Li Xiu or just disable him.

"Who kicks off?" Li Xiu looked at the ball beneath his feet and asked.

"You start." Shale said darkly, "Friendly reminder, don't just focus on the ball; make sure to protect your own life first."

Li Xiu didn't argue, immediately stretched his leg and ran towards Shale with the ball.

"Looking for death!" Shale watched as Li Xiu dared to rush forward with the ball, a cold smile appeared on his lips.

With both feet exerting force, Shale's body instantly launched, rapidly heading towards Li Xiu.

When he was about to approach, Shale leapt up, both knees aimed at Li Xiu's head.

This rush was both fast and fierce, akin to a jet crashing through the air, the sound of breaking air shrill and clear.

Li Xiu turned, brushing past the aerial Shale, the ball seemed glued to his foot, spinning with his leg, continuing towards the goal with Li Xiu.

After landing, Shale immediately burst out with terrifying speed, a kick in midair like an iron rod, instantly towards Li Xiu's back.

Li Xiu's back seemed to have eyes, with a swift point and pull of the soccer ball with his toes, he dodged to the right, avoiding Shale's kick, seamlessly continuing with his progression, the entire move smooth as water, pleasing to the eye.

"In terms of football skills, this person probably has a master-level standard. Such ball sense and technique, no one here can match. But unfortunately, this isn't solely a football duel..." commented a player, seemingly feeling sorry for Li Xiu.

During their discussion, Shale had already dashed up, frantically attacking Li Xiu.

With fists and feet crossing, his whole body seemed to be a lethal weapon, attacking Li Xiu from unforeseen angles, aiming at vital points with lethal precision.

In another's place, they probably would have fallen under Shale's violent assault by now.

Yet Li Xiu still carried the ball, floating elegantly like a butterfly, deftly evading Shale's attacks.

Shale's assault couldn't harm him; Li Xiu's feet still retained a grasp on the ball, seeming like he was truly playing football.

Initially laughing and discussing, the other players stopped their chatter at this point, their expressions gradually turning peculiar, looking somewhat surprised at the battle unfolding.

Kun Sha and Pa Shan exchanged a glance, recognizing the surprise in each other's eyes.

Li Xiu's speed and strength were much less compared to Shale, yet he could perfectly avoid Shale's assault, not giving Shale any chance to trap him—which was rather unbelievable.

Li Xiu's combat experience was far richer than Shale's, and his opponents were those terrifying Demon Spirits, far more frightening than humans.

In such a scenario, Li Xiu could manage effortlessly and had created many widely known combat techniques.

Like the Butterfly Propulsion Technique Qin Shi used before, it's a combination of Magic Armor Control and spatial positioning change.

That technique for Li Xiu was nothing significant, as the combat experience and spatial awareness he honed during battles with Demon Spirits were unmatched by ordinary people.

These techniques to Li Xiu were just ordinary combat skills; he never bothered to name them—they were named by others after watching his combat videos and studying them.

The technique Li Xiu was using now utilized changes in positioning to always stay in the opponent's blind spot of exertion power—when applied to Magic Armor, it's called "Angel's Wings" by outsiders.

In battles against Demon Spirits with speed beyond Magic Armor, Angel's Wings could play a significant role; Shale was evidently powerless against it,

feeling the frustration of sheer force with no place to deploy—nearly driven to madness.

Chapter 52: Something's Wrong

The true Angel's Wings must be paired with Demon Armor that can fly, offering combat skills without any blind spots in all directions.

Right now, Li Xiu is only employing part of these skills, drifting around Shale like a phantom, causing Shale to feel incredibly annoyed. Every time he wanted to exert his force, Li Xiu would just stand beside him at the most inconvenient spot for exertion, leaving Shale unable to unleash his power.

He wanted to lock onto Li Xiu, but every time he exerted force, it felt awkward, and Li Xiu would effortlessly brush his arms aside.

Bang!

Once again, while dodging Shale's attack, Li Xiu kicked the ball into the goal, clean and swift, not a trace of sluggishness.

Outside the football field, it was completely silent; whether it was the veteran players with years of experience, the new players who had just joined, or even the temporary coach of the team, all were looking at Li Xiu with astonishment, as if they had never seen a football match.

They indeed had never seen anyone play football like Li Xiu, at least not in the Mad Ball Trial.

Clearly, his physical condition was not as good as Shale's, yet he could toy with Shale with ease, under Shale's frantic attacks, he kicked the ball as if he was strolling through a park.

For a moment, they all had a daze, as if only now realizing that this, damn it, was how football should be played.

"It's your turn." Li Xiu kicked the ball to Shale's feet.

Shale looked at the ball at his feet, then raised his head to look at Li Xiu, with a strange expression he asked, "How did you do it?"

"Want to learn? I'll teach you." Li Xiu said calmly.

Shale's gaze towards Li Xiu became even more complex, suddenly he kicked the football underneath his foot into the air, turned around and walked away, muttering, "It's boring."

After that goal, none of the players looked down on Li Xiu for his physical condition anymore, implicitly acknowledging that Li Xiu had the qualification to join them in the Mad Ball Trial.

"Nicely done." Kun Sha gave Li Xiu a thumbs up, Li Xiu's performance exceeded his expectations, even he was quite surprised.

"Have you trained in combat before?" Pa Shan noticed something peculiar about Li Xiu's footwork; it didn't resemble football footwork, but rather the footwork from some combat techniques.

"In this world, you have to train in some self-defense techniques." Li Xiu replied with a smile.

"Can you teach me?" Pa Shan himself was proficient in footwork, which is essential for defeating the strong as the weak, but compared to Li Xiu, he knew he was still lacking.

"Of course, but it's not just about footwork. You also need to study human anatomy and psychology, perhaps you should also learn some sports mechanics." Li Xiu wasn't making things difficult for Pa Shan; to learn Angel's Wings, indeed requires knowledge of these fields.

"Teach me when you have time." Pa Shan understood Li Xiu was not implying otherwise, and nodded straightforwardly.

Li Xiu and Pa Shan integrated into the team, training with them.

"Such a surprise, this Li Xiu is truly a genius in terms of skills." In the VIP room overlooking the field, Zheng De stood at the floor-to-ceiling window, having seen everything that had just happened, watching Li Xiu on the field with eyes full of appreciation.

"Perhaps, you could switch up a player for the S-level Mad Ball Trial." Sitting on the sofa behind Zheng De was a woman, who surprisingly was Sha Chu, the owner of the Mad Ball team.

"Before he scored that goal, there was still a possibility to replace him, but now it's impossible." Zheng De squinted and said.

"Must it be this way?" Sha Chu said.

"There's no alternative, changing players now wouldn't be reasonable or logical." Zheng De's voice turned sinister, "Tyrone City can only have one voice, and that is my voice."

"I will wholeheartedly support you, sir." Sha Chu took a glance at Kun Sha in the field, commenting lightly, "It's just a pity for those players."

"As long as I am in control of Tyrone City, players like these are always obtainable, it's merely a matter of spending some gemstones and time." Zheng De laughed, "I won't forget the contribution your family has made to Tyrone City. Once successful, all those ruby mines will belong to your family."

"May your wishes come true, sir." Sha Chu raised her glass.

"And may you great fortunes." Zheng De smiled, raising his glass in response.

Sha Chu slowly drank the wine in her glass, while her peripheral vision drifted towards the field, where the figure of a vibrant player stood.

In the days that followed, Li Xiu trained within the team.

Li Xiu noticed that almost every day, one of the Demon Cores he closely kept on his person would disappear without a trace.

Now Li Xiu could confirm those Demon Cores weren't stolen, because no one could steal a Demon Core from his side like that without him having any idea.

Li Xiu still suspected whether the Demon Spirit infant inside his body wasn't dead, but a thorough internal check within the team was conducted.

The equipment here is far superior to those in Tyrone City's hospitals, yet still, no issues were found.

"If so many Demon Cores were truly absorbed into my body, surely I should feel something. The energy of these Demon Cores gathered together is not a small amount, it's impossible to feel nothing at all." Li Xiu's growing doubt lingered in his mind.

Fortunately, his body showed no problems, he could only continue to observe.

Time flew by quickly and soon it was the day the S-level Mad Ball Trial was to begin, Li Xiu and other players were brought outside to a base by Zheng De, where they saw a giant red door.

Inside and outside the base, soldiers were guarding everywhere; numerous Magic Armor Masters in their Demon Armors were seen patrolling.

Guyue City's players had already arrived early at the giant red door, seeing Zheng De bring the team, someone leading Guyue City's team smile mischievously and said, "Old Zheng, bringing only this bunch of misfit scraps, is Tyrone City truly out of people?"

"Whether they're people or not, we'll know in the trial. Stop your nonsense, let's begin." Zheng De said coldly.

The person with gold teeth waved and soldiers from behind him immediately brought out a box. Opening the box revealed a row of rubies.

Soldiers walked out behind Zheng De too, carrying a similar box filled with rubies inside.

People from both sides took the rubies from the boxes and carried them to the giant red door, embedding them one by one. Once all the rubies were embedded, the patterns on the red door emanated a red glow, and the door slowly began to open.

Players from both teams entered the red door, one by one, guided by instructions.

Li Xiu walked through the red door and arrived at a familiar arena stand, below which was a standard football field.

At the front of the stand were two stone platforms, each had a red and a white button on top.

When he looked at the opponent's players, something felt off.

Among the eleven players on the opponent's side, a few looked outright bizarre, almost to the extent of being described as odd.

Players participating in such a Mad Ball Trial must surely be top-notch, selected elite players, yet on those few players, Li Xiu did not see the confidence and composure that elite players are supposed to have, their eyes looked bewildered and at a loss.

Chapter 53 The Sacrificial Lamb

"Something's off. I don't recognize many of those players across from us," Kun Sha said, furrowing his brows as he noticed the issue.

Kun Sha had spent a long time in the Southern Cross Federation, so if there were any renowned players, he would've known them.

The fact that he didn't recognize these players only meant that they were nobodies before.

But in such a trial, using one or two unknown players might be understandable. How could Guyue City use so many no-name players?

"Could it be that Guyue City has given up on the final trial and just wants to win the match, so they found some strong Trial Takers who aren't football players to participate?" Pa Shan pondered out loud.

Kun Sha was about to say something more, but the screen on the field had already lit up.

"The S-Class trial is about to begin. Participants, please choose your teams. Pressing the red button automatically makes you part of one team, pressing the white button makes you part of another team. The trial rules are as follows... Countdown begins..."

A 600-second countdown appeared on the screen. The captain of Guyue City's team walked up to the red button and pressed it directly.

Even though he still had suspicions, having reached this point, Kun Sha could only walk up to the white button and press it.

All the team members went up one by one to press the buttons, with Pa Shan and Li Xiu following Kun Sha, pressing the white button in turn.

But when it was the next player's turn, the player behind suddenly said sorry to Kun Sha, then walked straight over to the red button.

The captain of Guyue City's team watched this unfold with a smile, showing no intention to stop it, as he watched the Tyrone City player press the red button.

Kun Sha and Pa Shan's expressions turned ugly, and Shale angrily shouted, "Zheng Xin, what the hell are you doing? Are you planning to betray Tyrone City?"

Zheng Xin said nothing, stepping behind the Guyue City captain, demonstrating his stance through his actions.

Shale still wanted to curse but found that others from his side were moving towards the red button too, and not just one.

In no time, except for Kun Sha, Li Xiu, Pa Shan, and Shale, all the players went over to the Guyue City side and pressed the red button.

The opposing eleven-member team was already complete, and the few original Guyue City players remained bewildered, their eyes full of panic.

"Captain, what's going on?" a player who couldn't press the red button rushed toward the Guyue City captain to question him.

"Scram!" a burly man beside the Guyue captain kicked him hard, sending him flying far away.

"I'm truly sorry, my team is full. You can choose to join the other team or stay here." The Guyue captain said indifferently.

Li Xiu already understood what had happened, no wonder only Shale opposed when he was appointed as a winger before, while the other players remained indifferent. They knew they wouldn't be on the same team with Li Xiu, the weaker Li Xiu was, the better for them.

It was all premeditated, and it must have something to do with the City Lord of Tyrone City, otherwise, so many players couldn't have been bought off without the City Lord knowing.

The only explanation was that the City Lord of Tyrone City was definitely one of the planners, perhaps even the mastermind behind it.

All of this was likely targeted at Kun Sha; otherwise, how could the City Lord not inform Kun Sha of the plan? Kun Sha was Tyrone City's top Magic Armor Master; how could the City Lord sacrifice him?

Li Xiu and Pa Shan both had connections with Kun Sha, and Li Xiu was even recommended by Kun Sha to join the team, which is why they were similarly targeted.

Perhaps the only one who was ignorant and suffering unwarranted disaster was Shale.

"Sorry for dragging you into this," Kun Sha sighed, apologizing to Li Xiu and Pa Shan.

He apparently understood what was going on; he knew Zheng De better than Li Xiu and naturally thought things through more clearly.

"Damn it, I'm screwed because of you people," Shale cursed, his face turning dark.

But he had no other options. Seeing the countdown time running low, he could only press the red button.

"What are you still standing there for? Hurry up and get over here," Shale shouted at the remaining Guyue City team members after pressing the red button.

Those people suddenly snapped out of their daze, rushing over to press the white button one by one.

"What position do you play?" Shale grabbed a man's collar, glaring ferociously as he asked.

"I... I... don't play football..." Although this outcome was expected, hearing it still left Shale in despair.

He yelled questions at the other few people, but got the same answers. Not only did they not play football, but they hadn't participated in trials before and weren't even Trial Takers.

"Damn Zheng De's ancestors!" Shale pushed the person he grabbed to the ground, roaring in anger.

"Getting angry won't help now, let's think about how to win the match," Li Xiu said.

"Win, my ass. Just us four plus these useless ones, how can we win?" Shale cursed.

"Do you want to survive, or do you want to stay here and wait to die?" Li Xiu said calmly.

Shale fell silent instantly. At this point, nothing could be said that would help, but given such circumstances, how was it possible to still win?

Looking at those trembling guys like chickens, Shale felt a surge of anger.

"Kun Sha, if you want to blame anyone, blame yourself for not reading the situation. Being a good Magic Armor Master, why come to a place like this to die? You gave others a chance to kill you yourself, can't blame anyone else," the Guyue captain said lightly, seemingly confident in his victory.

The fact was, indeed, that among Kun Sha's side, only he, Pa Shan, and Shale could fight, Li Xiu was at best half a player, not even one at that.

Any of the opposing players were as strong as Pa Shan and Shale. They might win one-on-one, but two-on-one was surely a loss.

The remaining ordinary people were just liabilities, utterly useless here.

Kun Sha's strength was formidable, but the Guyue team's captain would not be much weaker, likely entangling him until the end.

Li Xiu swiftly analyzed the current situation, and indeed the gap in strength was too vast.

As the countdown ended, everyone was transported to the field, with the Red Team on the left side and the White Team on the right.

The Red Team was strong and aggressive, staring down the White Team like wolves, while the White Team trembled like lambs to the slaughter.

"Pa Shan, could you tie down Dong Qiu? I'll try to take some of them out first," Kun Sha said in a low voice to Pa Shan, eyes full of killing intent, "If we make it out alive, Zheng De will face a bloody price."

"I'll do my best to hold him," Pa Shan nodded, his gaze solemnly fixed on the captain of the Guyue team.

He had also heard of Dong Qiu's name, whose physical enhancement was very high, not much inferior to Kun Sha's, and Pa Shan was probably not his match. But this was the only possible way for a slim chance of survival.

Li Xiu pondered over the trial rules just now; apart from being able to harm the opposing players, it was basically similar to regular football rules.

However, the Mad Ball Trial had no halftime break and required a full ninety minutes of continuous play.

Li Xiu noticed two particularly unique rules: the first one was that all players except the goalkeeper were not allowed to touch the football with their hands.

If, during this trial, a player touched the ball with their hands five times, they would be deemed to have failed the trial and would be directly eliminated. When a handball occurred, the offending player would be immobilized for one second, but the match would continue and not stop because of the foul.

Another rule was that if one side scored a goal, all members of both teams would be directly teleported back to their own half, and the match would restart.

While Li Xiu was thinking, the match had already begun, and nobody paid attention to the football as the players from the Guyue team directly charged toward the players from the Taro team.

On the Taro side, chaos ensued; Kun Sha, Pa Shan, and Shale prepared to confront, while the other players desperately ran backward, only wanting to save their lives.

Human fear overcame reason, and they didn't even consider that even if they survived until the end of the match, according to the trial rules, the losing team would have all members wiped out, so they would still die.

Pa Shan locked onto a target and did not care about the goal, charging first to intercept Dong Qiu, who was originally rushing toward Kun Sha.

Kun Sha and Shale then quickly rushed toward the other players.

Dong Qiu was intercepted by Pa Shan but had no intention of shaking him off to find Kun Sha, merely sneering and saying, "No matter what you plan, it's useless. Today, you must all die."

Pa Shan sensed things were amiss but had no time to think further. With steady steps, he approached Dong Qiu; both were masters of martial arts, and as soon as they clashed, Pa Shan could tell that the opponent's martial arts were on par with his own, and his physical advantage was stronger.

As Kun Sha charged toward the Guyue team, he was blocked by a player. Gathering energy into his fist, he struck fiercely at that player.

That player, knowing full well of Kun Sha's reputation, surprisingly showed no intention of dodging, instead meeting the blow head-on.

Bam!

The two fists collided, and both Kun Sha and that player took a step back, resulting in a situation of equal strength.

"Who are you?" Kun Sha immediately sensed something wasn't right. He had never seen or heard of this player, yet the strength of that fist was on par with his own.

"Guyue Corps, Deputy Corps Commander Jian Jia." When the player reported his name, Kun Sha realized that today's outcome would probably not end well.

Even though he hadn't heard of Jian Jia before, the Guyue Corps was Guyue City's ace force, composed entirely of Trial Takers. To become a Deputy Corps Commander in the Guyue Corps, one must be a terrifying individual.

Jian Jia wasted no words and charged again like a ferocious tiger.

In the battle with Jian Jia, Kun Sha found no advantage, and the opponent was highly skilled in combat techniques, forcing Kun Sha to retreat continuously.

Kun Sha knew he couldn't engage in a prolonged battle; otherwise, it would be pointless. A Skill Brand appeared on his finger, and his entire aura surged dramatically, even making his body seem to swell a size.

Fortunately, after entering the Trial Ground, clothes of unknown origin appeared, white skin-tight suits with excellent elasticity.

If it were ordinary clothing, it would have been torn apart by Kun Sha by now.

This was Kun Sha's S-rank skill, "Blood Boiling," with a two hundred percent increase, several times stronger than Li Xiu's E-rank Blood Boiling, and it had no time limit.

Though both were S-rank skills, Kun Sha's Blood Boiling was easier for prolonged use compared to Li Xiu's Super Exciting, but it lacked special effects.

After using the S-rank Blood Boiling, Kun Sha's speed and strength surged, like a combination of bear and wolf, tearing through the air, and his hands, with ferocious power, clawing toward Jian Jia.

Bam!

Fingers intertwined, Jian Jia surprisingly did not take a step back, remaining deadlocked with Kun Sha.

Several Skill Brands appeared on his fingers, and although his body did not exhibit any anomaly like Kun Sha's, it was evident that his strength and speed had significantly increased, making it impossible for Kun Sha, even with an S-rank skill, to gain a clear advantage.

"Kun Sha, S-rank skills are strong but not invincible. I have four A-rank skills combined, achieving the same effect as you. This is the difference between a Professional and an amateur. Even if your skills are stronger than mine, you still can't defeat me." Jian Jia said while grappling with Kun Sha.

Kun Sha now regretted not being able to use Demon Armor. If he could use it, killing Jian Jia would be as easy as reaching into a bag and pulling something out.

Pa Shan's situation was grim, completely at a disadvantage, suppressed painfully, only able to dodge passively, as the pain from the clash of muscle and bone transmitted through the nerves to his brain, causing Pa Shan to grit his teeth.

He wasn't the worst though; the worst was Shale.

Shale initially intended to rush in and take down an enemy, but he noticed four or five people charging toward him from the opposite side.

The other side had no intention of chasing those who were fleeing. The remaining nine people split into two teams, one team of four headed towards Li Xiu, and the other five surrounded Shale.

What was even more infuriating was that those five people had defected from his side, and they trained with Shale daily, knowing his capabilities very well.

Shale turned to run but was too late, already surrounded by the five.

"Shale, accept your fate. You're a murderer, already having killed countless people, dying suits you." A player surrounding Shale taunted.

"Accept your mother!" Shale suddenly started, turning and swinging a punch at the nearest player.

The player snorted coldly, raising an arm to block Shale's fist, fully understanding Shale's abilities and knowing his own physical capabilities were no less than Shale's, so there was no fear.

Argh!

The next second, the player's arm was brutally severed, eliciting a piercing scream.

During midway, Shale's fist turned into a hand blade, slicing at the player's arm, directly severing it.

On Shale's fingers, a black Skill Brand flickered.

"If you want my life, you'll have to trade your own, don't think you can bully me. You guys playing dirty are far off," Shale charged like a demon toward the player with the severed arm, intending to cleave open his head.

His A-rank "Iron-Cutting" skill had a limited duration, so he needed to expand his gains as much as possible.

But before he could reach the player with the severed arm, several players around him attacked from different directions, surrounding Shale.

Shale could only focus on survival first, moving sideways while swinging his arms to fend off two players on one side.

However, this quickly put Shale into a tough battle, as two fists cannot contend against four hands.

Though the players attacking him did not have advanced skills, at most having one or two E-rank or D-rank skills, the sheer number was overwhelming.

Before long, Shale was held from behind by a player, with two players on either side restraining his arms.

A player in front had hooked fingers, aiming for his eyes.

"Kun Sha, save me..." Shale struggled desperately, but couldn't break free from the restraint of three people, as the fingers closed in on his vision, about to touch his iris, unleashing a roar mixed with despair and resentment.

Chapter 55: "The Art of Evasion and Strategy"

But Kun Sha was tightly entangled by Jian Jia. Jian Jia's strength and speed were slightly inferior to Kun Sha's, and his skills were not as good either. The sustainability of A-level skills was far less than that of S-level.

Moreover, using four A-level skills simultaneously made the sustainability even worse.

But so what? As long as he could hold Kun Sha off for a while longer, until the others dealt with Shale, Pa Shan, and Li Xiu, no matter how formidable Kun Sha was, could he possibly take on all eleven of them alone?

Jian Jia was like a cunning hyena, strategically tangling Kun Sha.

When Kun Sha attacked fiercely, he retreated; when Kun Sha retreated, he tangled up again. Kun Sha couldn't resolve him quickly.

After all, Kun Sha was not a professional Trial Taker; he participated in trials only to enhance his physical fitness, to play football more enjoyably.

Now Kun Sha somewhat regretted not learning more about normal combat techniques.

Hearing Shale's angry roar, Kun Sha instinctively turned his head to look, realizing Shale was about to be blinded. He wanted to save him but couldn't possibly make it in time.

Jian Jia seized that brief moment of Kun Sha's distraction, and a blood-red Skill Brand appeared on his fingers again, his hand knife flashing like a venomous snake, swiftly slashing towards Kun Sha's side neck.

As Kun Sha tried to turn and block, it was already too late; he could only adjust his posture slightly to avoid vital areas, intending to bear the blow with his back.

Pa Shan was even more overwhelmed, barely defending against Dong Qiu's ferocious attacks, only managing to hold his ground thanks to his A-level defensive skill "Iron Wall," which deflected several of Dong Qiu's skill strikes.

Seeing two of their three members about to be severely injured, a sense of despair arose in everyone's hearts.

Suddenly, a light flashed on the field.

Shale's eyes widened, originally awaiting the impending stab of despair. Yet, a white light flashed before him; the fingers that were about to touch his eyeballs disappeared, the opposing players in front of him vanished, and the three forces suppressing his body dissipated.

Kun Sha, equally astonished, found the Jian Jia behind him gone, and he himself had returned to the spot where he had just been teleported onto the field.

Pa Shan experienced the same, everyone wearing expressions of confusion.

"What's going on?" Shale noticed that the opposing players had similarly returned to their original teleported positions.

"White Team scores and earns one point, the score is now 1-0," the cold electronic synthetic voice sounded, and the score on the screen changed to 1-0.

Everyone's gaze naturally shifted to Li Xiu, a subconscious action, as they could think of no one else capable of such a feat besides Li Xiu.

Though they thought it unlikely for Li Xiu to achieve this under the siege of four opposing players, there seemed no other possibility.

"It's one to zero. Can you still hold on?" Li Xiu's gaze swept across Kun Sha and the others' faces as he smiled and said.

"You're a goddamn genius, I love you!" Shale rushed over and lifted Li Xiu up, shouting in excitement.

Escaping death, he needed to release the fear and despair pent up in his heart.

The once annoying Li Xiu now seemed entirely pleasing, making Shale wish he could plant a kiss on Li Xiu's face.

"What happened? You four failed to deal with that kid and let him score? Are you eating shit?" Dong Qiu angrily scolded the four players who surrounded Li Xiu.

"That kid slips around like a loach among us, we're afraid of hurting our own, couldn't lay heavy hands on him, instead he slipped away..." one player explained gloomily.

He felt he could clearly kill Li Xiu, yet for some reason, the teammates always got in the way.

Though they surrounded Li Xiu, it somehow felt more uncomfortable for themselves than for Li Xiu.

"Dong Qiu, don't be hasty." Jian Jia glanced at Li Xiu on the other side of the field, first soothing Dong Qiu, then addressing the four, "Do you all feel like your teammates are always getting in the way?"

The four immediately nodded; they indeed all felt the same.

Having gotten the answer, Jian Jia understood the situation, lightly stating, "It's not your fault; you lack battlefield experience. That person is not someone you can handle. He must have survived countless bloody battles and has an incredibly sharp intuition for combat, using your lack of coordination to turn you into obstacles for each other."

"Is he really that powerful? With that physique, what kind of bloody battles could he have survived?" Dong Qiu looked skeptically towards Li Xiu.

Most other players shared the disbelief; Li Xiu's physical prowess wasn't strong.

"Don't forget, Trial Takers are human, not demons, and they fear human weapons. Lucky for us, this is within the Trial Ground, without weapons in his hands. Had he wielded a knife, you four would already be dead." Jian Jia paused before continuing, "Later, you four split into two groups; one of you stays with the ball, preventing him from getting close, while the other three engage him. I don't need you to kill him, just to keep him occupied, prevent him from grabbing the ball, or disturbing others. After we handle Kun Sha, we'll deal with him."

The four promptly nodded; Jian Jia was the true authority in this trial, even Dong Qiu had to listen, let alone the players.

"Kick off, then." As the side losing a point, they started the kick-off.

As per Jian Jia's arrangement, after kicking out, they sent the football directly to one player, who instead of charging forward, retreated towards their own half.

The other ten charged towards Li Xiu's team again, with Jian Jia directly targeting Kun Sha, determined to entangle him.

"Seems they've learned their lesson this time; it won't be as easy to score." Shale spoke while sneaking a glance at Li Xiu, hoping he'd work another miracle.

"Hold on, I'll take care of the rest," Li Xiu said, his expression unchanged, still calm as he watched the opposing actions.

"I've entrusted my life to you; even if I die, I'll hold on," Shale felt inexplicably more assured hearing Li Xiu speak.

From some point, Shale increasingly trusted Li Xiu, as if anything Li Xiu promised could undoubtedly be achieved.

Despite Li Xiu having the weakest physical strength among them, Shale instinctively relied on him.

"Don't worry, I won't keep you waiting long," Li Xiu said as he advanced towards the three approaching players, meeting them without a word.

"Entangle him." Seeing Li Xiu approaching, Jian Jia emphasized once more.

The three players gritted their teeth, closing in on Li Xiu as quickly as possible.

They knew well that losing this game meant losing their lives.

Chapter 56: The Little White Rabbit Turns into a Big Tiger

The two sides clashed again, but unlike last time, both parties were subconsciously observing the situation on Li Xiu's side.

Li Xiu didn't choose to evade; instead, he charged directly toward the three players surrounding him.

As he got closer, he ignored the players on both sides and pushed forward fiercely, rushing at the player blocking him head-on, landing a punch on the player's cheek.

The player saw Li Xiu opting for a head-to-head confrontation and was secretly pleased; he knew his physical fitness was better than Li Xiu's and wasn't afraid of such direct engagement.

Previously, he had strength with nowhere to apply it; this was a rare opportunity.

Understanding this, he immediately extended his arm to shield his head, blocking Li Xiu's attack while counterattacking with his left fist.

The two players on the left and right also pounced at Li Xiu simultaneously, their fists aimed at his face.

As the arms collided solidly, the player felt a surge of excitement, thinking he could finally take Li Xiu down with a frontal attack, and threw his prepared punch.

But just as his fist flew out, he felt something was amiss with the force on his arm—an unimaginable terror directly hammered his arm down.

Moreover, his whole body felt electrified, twitching relentlessly; he couldn't muster any strength, nor could he move.

Bang!

Li Xiu's fist struck his temple, causing his eyes to roll back as he fainted, with blood oozing from his eyes, ears, mouth, and nose.

Li Xiu stepped on him, leaped into the air to evade the flank attacks, and upon landing, galloped like an untamed horse toward the Red Team's player with the ball.

The players on either side were momentarily stunned, failing to chase Li Xiu right away.

It's no wonder they were intimidated; they initially deemed Li Xiu's physical fitness too weak, clearly not a match for them.

Yet now Li Xiu had felled a player with similar physical fitness with one punch; how could they not be afraid? They knew their fitness wasn't far off from Shale's, though they lacked fighting prowess.

It was like thinking they were hunting a rabbit, only to discover it was a tiger; not fleeing on the spot was a blessing.

"Catch up to him, don't let him get the ball," Jian Jia's shout brought the two players back to reality, but they hesitated, failing to catch up, and ultimately dared not pursue him wholeheartedly.

The player with the ball in the backfield saw Li Xiu charging and was frightened, running with the ball.

His speed exceeded Li Xiu's, but carrying the ball slowed him down, allowing Li Xiu to close in.

This player's psychological strength was evidently inadequate, and his ball-handling skills were ordinary; under pressure, he overstepped and couldn't catch up with the soccer ball.

As he attempted to chase it, he realized Li Xiu was right behind him and promptly dodged to the side, terrified by Li Xiu's previous punch.

Li Xiu paid him no mind, catching up with the soccer ball and shooting it directly; the ball hit the net to score another point.

A flash of white light returned all players to their positions, and the scoreboard showed 2:0.

Dong Qiu's face clouded over as he checked the player knocked out by Li Xiu, whose breathing was weak, with blood seeping from his eyes, ears, tongue, and nose—a sign he might not survive. Even if there was a chance to rescue him, such conditions were absent here.

Glancing at Li Xiu's position, Dong Qiu's expression grew even darker.

Initially certain of victory, he didn't expect problems to arise with Li Xiu.

The other players were no longer calm, with panic written on their faces—at this rate, they were likely to lose.

That man was simply a monster; nobody knew how many deadly tricks he had up his sleeve.

"You all guessed wrong," Jian Jia knew he had to act; Li Xiu had dampened their morale, and doing nothing would only worsen the situation.

All eyes turned to Jian Jia, who continued, "His physical condition isn't strong, as you saw; his fitness is considerably lower than yours."

"But he..." a player glanced at the one on the ground, more dead than alive, and hesitated to speak.

"He used a skill, and a powerful offensive one at that," Jian Jia pinpointed the crux: "Think carefully; if he were truly strong, why was his speed so slow when he chased the ball after evading you?"

The others awakened to his analysis.

Jian Jia resumed, "Based on his physical fitness, what level of ultimate trial do you think he could pass? S-level? A-level? That's unlikely, at most a C-level skill. Such a dominant offensive C-level skill would surely have limitations; he might only use it once. Even if he could use it once or twice more, so what? Now we're prepared, and with his fitness, an attack won't matter if it doesn't hit a vital spot."

As Jian Jia spoke, the previously low-spirited players began to regain their vigor.

"Without that skill, what's he got?" Jian Jia said coldly, "Dong Qiu, next you'll hold off Kun Sha, while the rest form two groups to take out Shale and Pa Shan. As for Li Xiu, leave him to me. I'll eliminate him quickly and join you. Even with just ten players, we're at an absolute advantage. As long as we don't err, victory is assured."

Jian Jia's words revived their confidence.

Meanwhile, Li Xiu conversed with Kun Sha and the others.

"Li Xiu, well done. Let's keep it up and show those bastards this is a soccer match, and you're the real master of the pitch... On this field, you're God..." Shale exclaimed excitedly.

"You're right, it's a soccer match, not just about brute strength," Li Xiu smiled and said, "But things might change, so I need your cooperation for what's next."

"Go ahead, whatever you need, I'm with you," Shale replied immediately.

Kun Sha and Pa Shan nodded too; by now, Li Xiu was the team's backbone.

"If I'm correct, next Dong Qiu will hold up Kun Sha, and the Deputy Corps Commander Jian Jia will look for me," Li Xiu said.

"Can you use your skill again?" Kun Sha asked upon hearing, knowing Li Xiu didn't hide his power but used a formidable skill to defeat that player.

"Probably not for now, I need some rest before I can use it again," Li Xiu answered.

Earlier, he used both 'Super Exciting' and 'Blood Boiling' skills simultaneously to take out that player, and the effect on his body was significant, needing a period of recovery before using 'Super Exciting' again.

"I'll go and block Jian Jia, Pa Shan will engage Dong Qiu to buy you time," Kun Sha suggested after pondering.

"I'll do my utmost to stall Dong Qiu and won't let him break free until your skill recovers," Pa Shan resolutely declared.

"No need for that trouble; you don't need to block anyone, just cooperate as I instruct," Li Xiu said before turning to Shale, "Shale, I need you to do me a favor."

"Speak, what do you want me to do?" Shale said straightforwardly.

"Be a villain," Li Xiu laughed.

"What do you mean?" Shale looked at Li Xiu with confusion.

"Have you heard the story about a pious believer encountering a flood, and then a plank floated over? The believer didn't swim towards the plank with all his might, because he firmly believed God would come to save him. After a while, a vine appeared in front of him; if he grabbed the vine, he'd be able to save himself. Yet, the believer kept waiting, believing God would save him. Finally, a boat passed nearby; he just needed to call out loudly to be rescued, but he still didn't do it—he was waiting for God to save him."

"He ended up drowning. After dying and meeting God, he earnestly asked God why He didn't come to save him despite his devout faith. God answered, saying, 'I saved you three times: I sent you a plank, arranged vines for you, and even sent a rescue boat. What more do you want me to do?'

"How could there be such foolish people in the world?" Shale scoffed.

"There's a few such foolish people right here." Li Xiu looked at the ordinary people in their team and continued, "I don't have time to give them three chances, so I need someone who can make them smart quickly."

Realizing the situation, Shale flashed an evil grin, "Don't worry, I'll make sure they get very clever."

After whispering a few words to Shale, he headed towards where the ordinary people were huddling for warmth.

Li Xiu knew that whatever he said was useless; while they understood the reasoning, selfish human nature couldn't be reasoned with.

Even though those people knew losing the team meant death, they wouldn't risk their lives. As long as Li Xiu and the others were alive, they wouldn't fight desperately.

Sacrificing others is always preferable to sacrificing oneself, even if they know they will be next in line.

As long as there are people in front to take the hit, and the knife isn't at their necks, no one will stand up and fight.

Shale walked over to the group, gave them a cold look, and said, "Later, just do as I say."

"We don't know anything; how can we help?" one pleaded pitifully.

"Yeah, look at us; what can we do? Even if we all went at once, we couldn't beat any of them..."

"Boss, spare us, give us a way to live,"

"I have three kids waiting for me at home; I can't die..."

These people kept pleading, looking pitiful one by one.

But Shale knew they had been watching for quite a while and thought their team still had hope.

So they chose to keep observing, considering if Li Xiu won, they would survive.

Going all out now seemed no different from dying in their eyes.

Seeing those pitiful people, Shale's lips curled with a touch of charming menace, and suddenly he swung his hand knife.

One of the pitiful people instantly had a blood mark on his neck, clutching his throat, unable to speak, making muffled sounds as blood gushed out with every utterance.

Within a few breaths, that person collapsed lifelessly to the ground.

"Am I asking you to work? Wake up and do as I say from now on; whoever dares not give their all, I won't wait till the match ends—I'll kill you all now," Shale's fierce gaze swept over them, shaking them awake.

They suddenly realized standing before them wasn't an Angel but a far more terrifying demon.

"Done." After returning, Shale chuckled and said.

Li Xiu glanced at the person Shale killed; Shale's methods were more ruthless than he intended, but at the moment, they needed someone like Shale to take action.

Why does the omnipotent God allow the existence of demons? It's a question worth pondering.

The Gu Yue team had almost finished their discussion. Before long, they charged over again, still leaving one person at the back to guard the ball.

"That guy's prediction was spot on." Shale, seeing Dong Qiu charging at Kun Sha and Jian Jia quickly moving towards Li Xiu, felt a deeper admiration for Li Xiu.

Several people rushed towards the left side of the field, seemingly attempting to tear open a path through Dong Qiu's group and break into the opponent's half.

"Naive!" Dong Qiu sneered as he called the team to encircle them.

How could four break through the encirclement of nine? But as they were about to block Li Xiu's group, they heard Shale blow a loud whistle.

The ordinary people, upon hearing the whistle, immediately charged towards the opponent's half from the right side of the field, desperately rushing at the player with the ball.

This sudden change caught Dong Qiu's group off guard; for the player, killing wasn't hard, but six people rushing recklessly could seize the ball.

As Dong Qiu's group was distracted by the turn of events, failing to react immediately, Li Xiu, Kun Sha, Shale, and Pa Shan suddenly split up, racing in different directions.

"Block them!" Dong Qiu and others instinctively aimed to intercept the fastest approaching Kun Sha and the rest.

Li Xiu started moving towards his half, but before running far, he saw Jian Jia catching up.

"What a troublesome guy!" Li Xiu scoffed, stopping in his tracks, just staring at Jian Jia as she chased.

"Why aren't you stopping them; why are you chasing me?" Li Xiu asked Jian Jia ahead.

"Coming from the same battlefield background, your little tricks don't work on me. It doesn't matter how many goals they score; as long as I kill you, the match ends," Jian Jia said indifferently, stepping towards Li Xiu.

"Are you sure you can kill me?" Li Xiu looked at Jian Jia with interest; her mind was indeed sharp, able to go straight to the point and never letting go despite the sudden situation.

"Did I not just say I also hail from the battlefield? Whether it's your tactics or your skills, they don't work on someone like me. Your physicality is insufficient, which is your fatal flaw, with no possible remedy. Outside the Trial Ground, I'd gladly let you live and even bring you into my legion. Unfortunately, circumstances don't allow me now, so I must ask you to die," Jian Jia finished and took a sudden step, like a snake lunging at Li Xiu, clawing at his throat.

Chapter 58: Battle Jian Jia

Li Xiu quickly moved to the left, dodging the grab, and instead of retreating, he tried to close in on Jian Jia.

Bang!

Jian Jia's foot suddenly appeared like a phantom in the path Li Xiu had to pass.

Li Xiu tried his best to retreat, but still couldn't completely avoid the kick from below. He could only cross his arms to block.

Bang!

The powerful force made Li Xiu's body involuntarily step back, retreating over ten steps without being able to stabilize. His arms trembled violently, bones seemingly cracked, and pain drilling through.

"Don't show off those skills in front of me. I've said, those tricks are useless against someone from the same battlefield." Jian Jia moved swiftly like a phantom, chasing after Li Xiu, whose stance hadn't stabilized, and reached for his throat again.

Li Xiu stared at Jian Jia, no longer trying to stabilize his center of gravity. Leveraging his retreating momentum, he sprang backwards, evading Jian Jia's grasp.

Jian Jia, like a bone-phagous demon, immediately closed in, his fists attacking quickly, leaving trails of afterimages in the air, as if the Thousand-Handed Guanyin was shrouding Li Xiu's head.

Skill Brands appeared on his fingers, Li Xiu's pupils suddenly dilated, taking over his entire eye sockets, transforming into eerie compound eyes — the C-level Fly's Eye skill, slowing Jian Jia's rapid movements significantly in Li Xiu's eyes.

Li Xiu moved swiftly, although not as fast as Jian Jia, yet like a willow swaying in the wind, dodging Jian Jia's attacks again and again.

Angel's Wings technique combined with the Fly's Eye granted him super dynamic vision, allowing Li Xiu to evade Jian Jia's attacks repeatedly.

"What an astonishing combat talent and skill, able to predict my moves. You are the first. If we had equal physical prowess, I wouldn't be a match for you, but now, you can only die." Jian Jia continued his frenzied attacks, forcing Li Xiu to retreat endlessly.

"Your eye skill's time must be almost up, isn't it? Once you can't see my moves, even prediction won't help you." Jian Jia spoke while attacking, each word hitting Li Xiu's weak spot.

Li Xiu remained silent; as Jian Jia said, the one-minute duration of the Fly's Eye was nearing its end.

If he couldn't see Jian Jia's attacks clearly, Angel's Wings would be useless.

Even if the Fly's Eye could keep going, Li Xiu's stamina was already lagging behind.

Facing a foe like Jian Jia, in such intense combat, Li Xiu had to expend more energy than usual to dodge his attacks.

Bang!

Li Xiu's reaction slowed a step, unable to completely dodge Jian Jia's fist, he could only use his arms to block, numbing them and causing muscles to tremble uncontrollably.

Li Xiu's body retreated, one arm hanging limp by his side, seemingly losing control.

"It's over, you won't even last until your skill finishes." Jian Jia advanced towards Li Xiu step by step.

Suddenly, the whistle of air sounded behind Jian Jia, and instinctively he turned to swing his fist.

Bang — his fist hit a soccer ball, sending it flying.

Jian Jia paused, feeling his movements stiffen momentarily, seeing the handball foul alert on the big screen.

Kun Sha finally seized the soccer ball, kicked it, aiming initially at Zhou Wen, but due to distance, it wasn't accurate, hitting Jian Jia's back instead.

The stiff moment lasted briefly. When Jian Jia regained composure, he found Li Xiu with his foot on the soccer ball.

"You know battlefield techniques well, are you equally skilled in soccer?" Li Xiu queried Jian Jia calmly while stepping on the ball.

"No need for skill." Jian Jia expressionless, charged at Li Xiu once more.

Li Xiu eyed the advancing Jian Jia and suddenly kicked the ball towards him.

Jian Jia poised to kick the ball away, but as his foot neared, the soccer ball drew a bizarre curve, eluding his leg, coincidentally striking his hand.

Jian Jia stiffened again, while Li Xiu quickly pursued and regained control of the rebound soccer ball.

"Coincidence?" Jian Jia fixed his gaze with peculiar interest on Li Xiu and the ball at his feet; he doubted it was mere chance.

If it wasn't a coincidence, then Li Xiu's soccer skills and predictive ability were terrifying.

"You've committed handball fouls twice; three more times and you'll be disqualified." Li Xiu remarked calmly, looking at Jian Jia.

"That depends on whether you have such ability." Jian Jia's fingers showed two Skill Brands, moving again like a phantom towards Li Xiu.

During previous battles, some skills were already used, and now some were on cooldown.

If it weren't for certain skills being unavailable, Li Xiu couldn't have stalled for so long.

Nevertheless, after Jian Jia's two skill activations, his speed increased, leaving afterimages even during movement.

Buzz!

As Jian Jia approached, Li Xiu kicked the soccer ball again.

The ball barely rotated in mid-air, wobbling towards Jian Jia.

Too close, Jian Jia saw the ball's unstable trajectory towards his chest but couldn't discern which way it would ultimately go.

Unburdened by doubts, Jian Jia performed an unexpected move.

He abruptly bent down, rushing forward, aiming to slip underneath, denying Li Xiu any opening.

Unexpectedly, as he ducked, the soccer ball suddenly descended and once more struck his hand.

Jian Jia stiffened for the third foul; meanwhile, the soccer ball returned to Li Xiu once again.

After recovering, Jian Jia silently charged at Li Xiu, but this time he tucked his arms behind his back. No matter Li Xiu's skill, hitting his hidden hands was impossible.

Li Xiu refrained from kicking, instead evading Jian Jia's offensive while dribbling, finding it easier as Jian Jia's hands were tucked behind.

"This close, he can't kick that kind of ball anymore." Without using hands, unable to harm Li Xiu, with such realization, Jian Jia reached out to grab Li Xiu.

Bang!

As his hand extended, Li Xiu fiercely kicked the ball, targeting not Jian Jia's hand, but his leg.

The ball ricocheted off Jian Jia's leg, rebounded off Li Xiu's knee, boosting its speed post-propulsion, and coincidentally struck Jian Jia's extended hand again.

Jian Jia was dumbfounded. Now, he regretted having two extra arms.

Chapter 59: Tyrone City on the Verge of Bankruptcy

A sudden, overwhelming fear surged in Jian Jia's heart, for he realized he had only one more handball foul left before he'd be dead if hit again.

Li Xiu had kicked the ball at Jian Jia's hand four times, an occurrence far beyond coincidence, leaving a massive shadow in Jian Jia's mind.

Despite being physically superior to Li Xiu, Jian Jia found himself harboring a fear of Li Xiu now.

Li Xiu glanced at the stunned Jian Jia, lightly nudged the ball forward with his toe.

Jian Jia reacted as if he'd encountered a venomous snake, retreating several meters swiftly, only to realize that Li Xiu hadn't kicked the ball towards him, but was instead running towards him with the ball.

Jian Jia's face alternated between pale and green; within moments, he seemed to have made up his mind and turned to sprint towards his team's half.

This led to an astonishing scene on the field: Jian Jia was sprinting ahead while Li Xiu chased after him with the ball.

Of course, Li Xiu couldn't catch up to Jian Jia, but this sight left the red team members dumbfounded.

"What... what is happening..." Dong Qiu, battling Kun Sha, almost thought there was something wrong with his eyes.

The other team members, witnessing this scene, found their morale plummeting instantaneously.

A powerhouse like Jian Jia, being chased by Li Xiu, seemed like a tale from Arabian Nights.

"Stop him, I've used up all my handball fouls." Jian Jia shouted loudly as he approached his teammates.

Upon hearing Jian Jia, several team members immediately stood behind him, forming a human wall.

Li Xiu, squinting at the human wall, suddenly raised his leg and shot powerfully, sending the football flying with a menacing roar.

Seeing the wall behind him, Jian Jia relaxed slightly.

But the next moment, his eyes widened, pupils constricting to the extreme, as a football seemingly appeared out of nowhere and struck his hand.

With the wall blocking his view, Jian Jia couldn't see where the ball came from, though others saw clearly.

The ball that Li Xiu kicked had strangely curved in a half-circle, like a crescent blade, bypassing the wall and hitting Jian Jia's hand directly.

With Jian Jia's capabilities, he should have reacted in time, at least preventing the ball from hitting his hand.

But he was so consumed by the fear of death that he failed to calm down and recognize the danger.

Bang!

Before everyone's eyes, Jian Jia's body was blown to pieces by the trial armband.

With the strongest Jian Jia dead, the red team fell into chaos, and Li Xiu no longer aimed for the goal but directed the ball at the remaining red team players.

The sound of the football colliding with hands echoed repeatedly as Li Xiu's kicks consistently hit the red team players.

Every time the ball rebounded, Li Xiu was right there in position to kick it out again.

The players hit by the ball immediately stiffened, Shale and Pa Shan seized the opportunity to severely injure or even kill the paralyzed opponents.

About a minute after Jian Jia was eliminated, the entire situation on the field completely reversed.

When only Dong Qiu was left to fight for the red team, he knew it was over and gave up resisting.

"You piece of trash, thought you could take me down, now you see how formidable I am!" Shale, covered in numerous injuries and blood on his face indistinguishable from friend or foe, shouted.

Having been assaulted by several individuals, his injuries were significant, but fortunately not fatal.

Pa Shan was slightly better off. Unlike Shale, he was skilled in defensive tactics - to put it simply, he could endure blows. Though he took as many hits as Shale, his injuries weren't as severe.

"Dong Qiu, can you explain what's going on?" Kun Sha refrained from lethal action and asked Dong Qiu.

"What's there to say, we're doomed anyway. Get on with it, hit me hard if you want to torture me," Dong Qiu said, knowing he was destined to die, laying all cards on the table.

"I'll break every bone in your body, let's see if your bones are harder than your mouth," Shale taunted, preparing to strike.

Kun Sha stopped Shale, saying to Dong Qiu, "I know this incident isn't your doing; you were forced to comply. If you tell me everything you know, I promise to look after your family."

Dong Qiu scoffed, "Don't threaten me with my family, even if you get out, you won't survive."

"Do I need to threaten you? Think about it, if Zheng De treated me like this, you should know better than I what your master is like. With the losses you've caused him, do you think he'll spare your family after you're dead?" Kun Sha spoke calmly, without anger.

Dong Qiu's expression shifted; he was well aware of what the Lord of Guyue City was like.

Just as Kun Sha and his companions thought he was wavering, Dong Qiu suddenly surged forward and attacked the ordinary onlookers nearby.

The air filled with screams as Dong Qiu slaughtered several bystanders in a flash, leaving them dead with shattered skulls.

"Dong Qiu, what are you doing?" Pa Shan rushed forward, but it was too late.

"You must swear, if anyone leaks what I say, may their entire family perish," Dong Qiu coldly declared, allowing Pa Shan to grab him by the collar.

Pa Shan instantly understood that Dong Qiu feared these people might spread the word, bringing disaster upon his family.

"Would you trust our oaths?" Shale sneered.

"I don't trust you, but I trust Kun Sha," Dong Qiu replied, looking at Kun Sha.

"Fine, I swear I'll keep your secret and protect your family. If anyone leaks this, I'll personally take their head," Kun Sha vowed solemnly.

After Kun Sha swore, Dong Qiu finally began to reveal all the underlying causes.

In recent years, Tyrone City has been consumed by internal strife, having replaced five City Lords over seven years. Its economic strength and power

are far from what they once were. While still one of the five major cities in name, the truth is, Tyrone City hardly deserves that title now, lagging behind some smaller but powerful cities of the Southern Cross Federation.

Tyrone City is on the brink of bankruptcy, the debts of the City Lord are so immense that even selling the entire City Lord's Mansion wouldn't suffice to pay them off.

Zheng De fears that if others discover the extent of his debt, they will band together to overthrow him. So, he plans to preemptively eliminate any threatening noble families and seize their wealth to repay his debts.

Kun Sha, the premier Magic Armor Master in Tyrone City, is ostensibly his ally, yet maintains a neutral stance, much to Zheng De's displeasure.

Moreover, Kun Sha has too much prestige and camaraderie among the Magic Armor Masters, and Zheng De fears he might eventually usurp his position; after all, such events are commonplace in Tyrone City. Thus, he conspired with the Lord of Guyue City to orchestrate this elaborate scheme.

The aim was to eliminate Kun Sha, and naturally, those close to him, like Li Xiu and Pa Shan, had to be dealt with too.

Shale was merely a pawn used by Zheng De, who never trusted him, so Shale was completely in the dark about all this.

Zheng De even secretly set up a betting ring, wagering on Kun Sha's team to lose.

People of Tyrone City, drawn by Kun Sha's reputation, mostly bet on his team to win, allowing Zheng De to amass considerable wealth.

"Are you making up stories? Who could force the City Lord of Tyrone City, one of the most powerful five in the Southern Cross Federation, into such a corner?" Shale didn't believe a word of it.

"Eternal Heaven," was all Dong Qiu needed to say to silence Shale.

Chapter 60 Passing the Flower While Beating the Drum

"How could Zheng De owe a debt to Everlasting Heaven? What did he take from there?" Kun Sha frowned and asked.

"He took nothing." Dong Qiu mocked: "Every city in the Southern Cross Federation has its own currency. Tyrone City's Tyrone currency has always been tied to Gemstone and exchanged at a fixed rate with the currencies of other main cities in the Southern Cross Alliance. But Zheng De is too greedy, continuously printing more Tyrone currency to make up for the cost of gaining power, in order to seize Gemstones from the residents of Tyrone City."

"According to what you said, he should be very wealthy, why would he owe a debt to Everlasting Heaven?" Shale was very puzzled.

"Without Everlasting Heaven, Zheng De could indeed have made a fortune. But the people of Everlasting Heaven suddenly appeared, teamed up with several other main cities to short Tyrone currency, seizing a large amount of Gemstone. Now, Tyrone currency can't be exchanged for Gemstone with Zheng De anymore. Once the news spreads, if the residents of Tyrone City try to exchange Tyrone currency for Gemstone, the City Lord's Mansion and even the entire Tyrone City will go bankrupt immediately. By then, Tyrone currency will be worthless paper..."

Li Xiu and the others shivered at the shocking news; Everlasting Heaven had taken away the wealth of Tyrone City without a fight, and directly caused the collapse of its hard-won stability. This was even more terrifying than murder.

Once Tyrone currency can't be exchanged for Gemstone, the residents of Tyrone City will be ruined, and God knows how many people will die then.

"Zheng De is ruthless. He plans to directly seize the wealth of other powerful families in Tyrone City by force, using others' blood to extend his life." Li Xiu shook his head and said.

"So, you must die. Even if you could get out, Zheng De would never let you leave alive." Dong Qiu said.

Even without knowing about Tyrone City's impending bankruptcy, Kun Sha and Li Xiu knew Zheng De would never let them leave alive, which wasn't surprising at all.

"The time is almost up, I must go. Good luck, I sincerely hope you all survive." Dong Qiu looked at the countdown on the screen, which was about to hit zero.

Bang!

After the countdown ended, that cold electronic voice sounded again, Li Xiu and his group received the reward, while Dong Qiu was blown up by the trial wristband.

Li Xiu felt a sharp pain from the wristband, and a powerful warm current entered his body, making him noticeably feel physically stronger.

A Demon Core appeared in front of him, unmistakably an S-level Demon Core. Kun Sha and the other three received the same reward.

"The final trial is about to begin. Those who don't wish to participate in the final trial can remove their trial wristbands and leave..."

Leaving now would mean being killed by Zheng De, so the four of them unanimously chose to participate in the final trial.

When the final trial started, Li Xiu and the others were surprised to find that there were five participants in the final trial, not just the four of them.

The other person was one of the people that Dong Qiu silenced, who was severely injured but pretended to be dead and survived by hiding.

"The final trial begins, trial rules are as follows..."

After listening to the rules, Kun Sha's face turned very ugly, because they were entirely different from those in his last final trial.

The last S-level Mad Ball Trial's final involved shooting a ball from midfield, but instead of a goal, the target was another soccer ball in the corner of the goal.

Kun Sha miraculously managed to succeed then, and has been practicing ever since, with a ten-out-of-ten chance of success. But the current final trial is not the same.

This time, the final trial's rules are simple: there are five circles on the pitch, and they must stand inside them and pass the ball sequentially.

During the pass, music will play on the screen. When the music stops, whoever has the ball in their circle will be eliminated.

The ball can only be passed in order; if it doesn't reach the next Trial Taker's circle, the passer is considered having failed the trial and will be eliminated.

If the ball reaches the circle but the circle's Trial Taker fails to touch and pass it out, then that receiver fails and will be eliminated.

The trial consists of four rounds, and four of the five participants will be eliminated.

Basically, it's a soccer version of hot potato; whoever ends up with the ball will die.

"I'm sorry, it's my fault. I hadn't expected the S-level final trial rules to change." Kun Sha said helplessly.

"Why talk about this now? Everyone can just trust their luck." The music started playing, the ball landed at Pa Shan's feet, and he passed it to Shale.

Shale caught the ball and glanced at the severely injured, incapacitated ordinary person, with a ruthless glint in his eyes.

Bang!

Shale kicked the ball fiercely, sending it flying with a howling wind, crashing into the person's abdomen. The ball stopped in the circle and didn't roll out.

Already severely injured, the force sent him sprawling on the ground, clutching his stomach in agony, unable to even get up to pass the ball.

After a while, the person couldn't get up, and the music abruptly ceased.

Bang!

The person's body, along with the wristband, exploded, blood splattering everywhere.

"First round trial ends, second round trial begins."

After that eerie voice ended, the ball automatically returned to Shale's circle, starting the trial again from him.

Since the person in the middle was eliminated, Shale had to pass the ball to the next, Li Xiu.

What Li Xiu hadn't expected was that Shale didn't kick the ball violently, but obediently passed it into Li Xiu's circle.

"Why are you staring? I don't want you to die quickly. I want you to suffer mentally, to taste the fear of slowly walking toward death." Shale snarled viciously.

Li Xiu shook his head without saying anything, dribbling the ball around his circle before stopping near Kun Sha.

He didn't pass the ball immediately but held it underfoot, seemingly lost in thought.

If looked closely, one would notice Li Xiu's head moving rhythmically.

"Li Xiu, what are you waiting for? The music could stop anytime, pass the ball quickly." Kun Sha urged Li Xiu to pass the ball.

He already decided, it was him who brought Li Xiu and Pa Shan into this, so if anyone should die, it should be him first.

Thus, his mind was made up. Once Li Xiu passed him the ball, he'd hold it in his circle until the music ended.

But Li Xiu stood there, showing no intention of passing the ball, seemingly ignoring Kun Sha.

"Li Xiu, pass the ball." Kun Sha's eyes were moist; he thought Li Xiu shared his idea, willing to sacrifice first for their sake.

Shale and Pa Shan watched the scene, their expressions a bit odd.

No matter how Kun Sha urged, Li Xiu remained unmoved, his head down, absorbed in his thoughts.

Suddenly, Kun Sha heard the music stop, his heart sinking instantly.